

ABSTRACT

Disclosed is a constant current driving unit for constant current driving a plural number of series connected light emitting diodes by a pulse-width modulating constant current driving circuit. Bypass circuits (80A) to 80(E), made up by a plural number of thyristors (81A) to (81E), each connected in parallel with each of series-connected light emitting diodes (41A) to (41E), are provided with gate potential setting circuits (83A) to (83E). These gate potential setting circuits afford to the thyristors a gate potential value such that, when the series-connected light emitting diodes (41A) to (41E) are operating as normally, the thyristors (81A) to (81E) are in the off-state. The gate potential setting circuit affords to the thyristors another gate potential value such that, when the light emitting diodes (41A) to (41E) are in the open state, the thyristors connected in parallel with the light emitting diodes (41A) to (41E) in the opened state will be in a turned-on state.